

Finally, I am concerned that Mr. Mayorkas did not seem to express any regret whatsoever for his previous actions during his recent confirmation hearing before the Homeland Security Committee. Instead, he appeared to take the view that interfering in EB-5 cases on behalf of well-connected politicians and stakeholders was somehow the same as casework help offered to Americans who experienced problems with the international adoption systems. It was a baffling comparison.

Now, every one of us Senators knows that when a nominee for the Cabinet or Subcabinet comes before our committee, they are always asked questions by Senators—for sure, I do it: Will you respond to our oversight letters, phone calls, or appearing before our committee? And every one of them says yes, but not every one of them—how would you say it? Not every one of them keeps their word, I guess is what I should say. So I suggest to them, if you really want to be honest to take that oath to answer in an honest fashion, maybe when you have that question asked, “Will you respond to requests from committee members in our oversight work?” you ought to say “maybe” instead of saying “yes.”

Anyway, I think it is very clear that I strongly oppose Mr. Mayorkas's confirmation, and I urge all of my colleagues to reject it as well.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. KING. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that upon the conclusion of morning business on Tuesday, February 2, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Calendar No. 5, Peter Buttigieg, of Indiana, to be Secretary of Transportation; further, that the time until 12 noon be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees and that at 12 noon, the Senate vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). The Senator from Montana.

ABORTION

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, tomorrow is the 48th annual March for Life. Although this year's march will primarily be virtual, the importance of standing together to protect the unborn, the most vulnerable, and all life, is as important now as it has ever been.

Forty-eight years ago, our country started down a dark path. Forty-eight

years ago, the Supreme Court tragically ruled in *Roe v. Wade*, and since then, we have lost the lives of 62 million people—62 million and counting—unborn babies, precious lives, by abortion.

I believe every human being is born with God-given dignity and potential. No court, no legislature, no law can take that away. Nevertheless, today, babies with Down syndrome are the most endangered on Earth.

For me, this is very personal. Just under 3 years ago, our world was blessed with a sweet baby boy named Andrew. He has Down's. His parents are very close friends. Andrew is a true joy, and his family celebrates his life every single day. Our world truly would not be the same without him.

But in the United States, 67 percent—67 percent—of babies diagnosed with Down syndrome are aborted, two out of three. For every person with Down syndrome alive today that you know or you meet—our friends, our family members, loved ones—two more are gone from this world because of abortion. This is chilling.

In Europe, the numbers are even worse. In fact, in Iceland, because of abortion, the population of individuals with Down syndrome is virtually being eradicated. As prenatal screenings increase in availability, mothers frequently learn before birth if their baby has Down syndrome. Rather than giving supportive resources, these vulnerable moms are often pressured to abort the baby. We all too often hear of a false compassion that it would be better for unborn babies with Down Syndrome or other disabilities to not be brought into this world rather than live a life that might be different from other children. But that is not who we are as Americans.

I am deeply concerned that for babies born with Down syndrome, abortion has become “a tool of modern day eugenics,” as Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas has said. It pains me to think about it.

But we can't just think about this pain and the pain that it causes. We have to do something. We have to protect those precious lives at all costs. It is the duty of this body to end this injustice. That is why I am joining my colleague from Oklahoma, Senator INHOFE, in introducing the Protecting Individuals with Down Syndrome Act, which will prohibit abortions that are sought because of a diagnosis that an unborn child has or may have Down syndrome.

This effort has the overwhelming support of the American public. In fact, just yesterday, a new Knights of Columbus-Marist poll found that 70 percent of Americans oppose aborting a child on the basis that the child will be born with Down syndrome—70 percent. In fact, that includes over half of those who identify as pro-choice.

This issue also sadly exposes a terrible hypocrisy we are seeing among supporters of abortion on demand. In

fact, today, most Republicans and Democrats here in Congress are unified in their support for the Special Olympics and for protecting individuals with disabilities. Yet many of my colleagues across the aisle will oppose this commonsense legislation to stop the most lethal kind of discrimination imaginable, and that is being singled out and brutally killed because of a Down syndrome diagnosis. It is shameful.

As Henry Hyde famously said: “The promise of America is not just for the privileged, the planned and the perfect.”

It is our duty to protect every innocent life, no matter how small, no matter how many chromosomes they may have.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

NOMINATION OF ALEJANDRO NICHOLAS MAYORKAS

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. President, I stand before you and my colleagues today to speak in support of the nomination of Alejandro Mayorkas to serve as Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

There is no question that Ali Mayorkas is qualified for this position. He previously served as the Director of U.S. Customs and Immigration Services, then as Deputy Secretary at DHS.

Today, I want to tell you about Ali Mayorkas's story. I want to tell you why he is the right pick for this position. And I want to tell you why we can achieve what we need to with Mr. Mayorkas leading the Department of Homeland Security.

During his hearing before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, my fellow committee members and I had a chance to hear from Mr. Mayorkas and hear his family history.

He told us the harrowing story of his family fleeing persecution, traveling to a new country in search of freedom, acceptance, and a safe place to call home.

During the Holocaust, Mr. Mayorkas's mother lost her paternal grandparents and seven of her uncles simply for being Jewish—simply because of the faith they practiced. His mother and his maternal grandparents fled, but they fled in order to survive.

But the story of Mr. Mayorkas's family was far from over. His parents fled Cuba during Castro's revolution, bringing Mr. Mayorkas and his sister here to the United States in 1960. They came here as refugees searching for freedom, searching for acceptance, searching for safety.

Ali Mayorkas is an American success story. He came here as a child. His family made a life here. He pursued an education. He dedicated his life to public service. He worked hard to give back to the Nation that gave his family so much.

And now, Mr. Mayorkas has volunteered to serve his country once again.

In this new role, he will work to keep our Nation safe and secure while ensuring that we treat all human beings with dignity and respect.

Under the last Presidential administration, we saw unimaginable cruelty—family members separated from each other, children taken from their mothers' arms. We saw a total disregard of the struggles of refugees facing persecution in their home countries and making the heartbreaking choice to leave and make the dangerous journey to the United States.

I know that under the leadership of Secretary Mayorkas, our Department of Homeland Security will strive to uphold the values of our Nation. He will also bring much needed stability to the Department. He will work to reverse the cruel and heartless policies of the previous administration. He will work to protect Dreamers and TPS holders. He will work on smart solutions to secure our border. And he will work with Congress to finally pass comprehensive immigration reform. That is not all he will do at the DHS.

Under Mr. Mayorkas's leadership, he will work to ensure the safety and security of our homeland—the homeland he was brought to as a child, the homeland that he and his family have made their own. I spoke of the persecution that Ali Mayorkas's family faced during the Holocaust—a threat of anti-Semitism and White supremacy. Well, it still persists today, and it is growing right here in the United States and everywhere across the globe.

Last year, a DHS assessment concluded that “racially and ethnically motivated violent extremists—specifically white supremacist extremists—will remain the most persistent and lethal threat in the Homeland.”

We have seen that violent extremism in action. We saw it on January 6 in this very city against this legislative body and in this very Chamber. When I asked Ali Mayorkas about this issue during our committee hearing, he made clear that he understands the threat that White supremacy, anti-Semitism, and extremism pose to the health of our Nation and to the health of our democracy.

If we are going to fight hatred and violent extremism, we need someone leading the charge who understands and takes seriously the threat to all Americans—the threats to our children, to our schools, to our workplaces, and to our places of worship. He is committed to addressing online radicalization and strengthening the Nonprofit Security Grant Program to ensure that houses of worship and other nonprofit organizations are kept safe from potential terror attacks.

So whether it is combating extremism, foreign or domestic terrorism, cyber attacks, or adversaries from abroad, Mr. Mayorkas expressed a clear commitment to keeping our Nation safe and is fully prepared and qualified to serve as the head of DHS.

Ali Mayorkas is the right pick to lead this Department, and I urge swift

confirmation so that he can get to work immediately for us and our country. I will vote for Ali Mayorkas, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

NOMINATION OF ALEJANDRO NICHOLAS MAYORKAS

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise in support of Alejandro Mayorkas's nomination to be Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

As recent events have shown, our country is facing dangerous threats to our security and to our national security. Violence and domestic terrorism, spurred on by White supremacist ideology, anti-government sentiment, and conspiracy theories, continue to rise. We saw the tragic and deadly result of that growing threat right here in the Capitol just 3 weeks ago, and just yesterday the Department of Homeland Security issued a counterterrorism bulletin, warning of possible further violence in the coming weeks.

Earlier this year, we learned that hackers—likely backed by a foreign adversary—carried out the largest cyber security breach of our Federal Government. We still do not have all of the answers on how they were able to infiltrate our networks or what information they have access to.

All this is happening while we are struggling to control a once-in-a-century pandemic that has, tragically, taken over 425,000 American lives so far.

The Department of Homeland Security should be leading a forceful response to these complex and significant threats and protecting Americans, but the Department and its more than 240,000 employees need a qualified, experienced, and Senate-confirmed leader at the helm—a leader like Alejandro Mayorkas.

Mr. Mayorkas has built an extensive national security record throughout his career in public service. He has been confirmed by the Senate three times, including twice for senior roles at the Department of Homeland Security. Not only did he help lead the Obama administration's successful responses to the Ebola and Zika epidemics, he also played a critical role in protecting the homeland from foreign and domestic terrorism, strengthened our national cyber security, and increased cooperation between the Federal Government and local law enforcement agencies.

Not only does he stand ready to lead the Department as it tackles serious and challenging national security threats, Mr. Mayorkas also understands that the Department and its mission have a real effect on people and their families. His own family's journey to the United States—first fleeing Nazi occupation in Eastern Europe and later immigrating to the United States from Cuba—has given

him a unique perspective on the very heart of the Department's mission—something that was certainly lost during the previous administration. Mr. Mayorkas is uniquely qualified to make sure the Department of Homeland Security is working to protect people from all backgrounds, all communities, and all walks of life.

Mr. Mayorkas has the qualifications, the experience, and the record of accomplishments to provide steady leadership, to help restore trust in the Department, and to safeguard our national security. That is why it is no surprise that his nomination has been endorsed by four former Homeland Security Secretaries and a former Acting Secretary from both Democratic and Republican administrations. He also has the support of a group of more than 30 cyber security experts, 34 former Homeland Security officials, and multiple law enforcement organizations, including the Fraternal Order of Police.

Within this body, there are certainly very different views of the role of the Federal Government, but one thing I think we can all agree on as a top priority is keeping Americans safe. It is our No. 1 job, and that is why I am asking my colleagues to join me today in supporting the confirmation of Mr. Mayorkas as Secretary of Homeland Security so that he can quickly begin the important and essential task of working to strengthen our national security and safeguarding all Americans.

I ask unanimous consent that the cloture vote begin immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Alejandro Nicholas Mayorkas, of the District of Columbia, to be Secretary of Homeland Security.

Charles E. Schumer, Gary C. Peters, Brian Schatz, Robert Menendez, Thomas R. Carper, Sheldon Whitehouse, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tina Smith, Sherrod Brown, Patrick J. Leahy, Cory A. Booker, Catherine Cortez Masto, Richard J. Durbin, Jeanne Shaheen, Dianne Feinstein, Jack Reed, Christopher Murphy, Martin Heinrich.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Alejandro Nicholas Mayorkas, of the District of Columbia, to be Secretary of Homeland Security, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.